



ECOWAS COMMISSION
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CENTRE DE GESTION DES RESSOURCES EN EAU (CGRE)
WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT CENTER (WRMC)
CENTRO DE GESTÃO DOS RECURSOS HÍDRICOS (CGRH)



**PERMANENT FRAMEWORK FOR COORDINATION AND
MONITORING OF INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT IN WEST AFRICA (PFCM/IWRM-WA)**

**1st EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE SUBS-REGIONAL
CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL ON WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
(RCCWR)**

Dakar, July 10-11, 2025

REPORT OF THE 1ST EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE RCCWR

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I. INTRO

On **July 10 and 11**, 2025, the **1st Extraordinary Session** of the Sub-Regional Consultative Council on Water Resources (RCCWR) of the Permanent Coordination and Monitoring Framework (PFCM) for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in Africa was held in the conference room of the Fleur de Lys Hotel in Dakar.^{1stExtraordinary Session of the Sub-Regional Consultative Council on Water Resources (RCCWR) of the Permanent Coordination and Monitoring Framework (PFCM) for Integrated Water Resources Management in West Africa.}

The following participated in this session:

- The National IWRM Focal Points of the ECOWAS and UEMOA Member States;
- The IWRM Focal Points of the Basin Organizations in the region (ABN, ABV, ABM, OMVG, OMVS, CBLT, ABCBT, OGBFT);
- Representatives of local authorities;
- Representatives of civil society organizations, including the private sector;
- Representatives of sub-regional institutions involved in the water sector in West Africa (UEMOA, CILSS, MRU, GWP/WA);
- ECOWAS structures involved in water resource management (Fouta Djallon Highland Program, PPDU);
- Technical and financial partners.

II. OPENING CEREMONY

The opening ceremony was presided over by **Baboucar Mboundar NGOM, Secretary General of the Ministry of Hydraulics and Sanitation**, on behalf of **the Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation of Senegal**.

Three speeches marked the opening:

Mr. Bakary FATY, DGPRE of Senegal, IWRM focal point, welcomed all participants and wished them a pleasant stay in Dakar.

Mr. Kouakou Alexis KOUASSI, Director of the Water Resources Management Center (CGRE), spoke on behalf of **Mr. Sediko DOUKA, Commissioner for Infrastructure, Energy and Digitalization** of the **ECOWAS Commission**. He thanked the Government and people of Senegal for agreeing to host the first Extraordinary Session of the Sub-Regional Consultative Council on Water Resources (RCCWR) in Dakar and for all the facilities provided for this purpose. He indicated that the main objective of this extraordinary session was to reactivate the RCCWR after a long period of inactivity. To this end, he stressed the

importance of the RCCWR in the institutional framework governing water resources at the regional level and announced that this extraordinary session would be marked by the election of a new RCCWR president.

Finally, **Mr. Baboucar Mboundar NGOM** delivered the opening speech on behalf of the Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation of Senegal. He welcomed the participants and thanked ECOWAS for choosing Senegal to host the first extraordinary session of the RCCWR. He expressed the hope that this meeting in Dakar would mark a new beginning for the RCCWR and contribute to the revitalization of the regional IWRM process in West Africa, which began last year under the auspices of ECOWAS.

III. PROCEEDINGS OF THE SESSIONS

The meeting's proceedings were divided into four (4) sessions

III.1. Introductory Session

This session was facilitated by **Mr. Augustine AMARA, National Focal Point for IWRM in Sierra Leone**. It was devoted to the following two points:

III.1.1. Introductory note

This presentation focused on the following points: context and rationale for this extraordinary session of the RCCWR, objectives and expected outcomes, methodological approach; Presentation of the regional IWRM process in West Africa.

Comments/Questions / Recommendations following the Introductory Session:

- Reflect on the integration into the PTBA of the CGRE of a program dedicated to capacity building for water sector actors in West Africa;
- What is the policy on water at the WRMC/ECOWAS level? Given that the various structures in our States do not have the same approach to managing water-related issues, namely drinking water, hydraulics, agricultural water, etc.;
- Strengthen the involvement of young people in the implementation of WRMC activity programs;
- Propose a sustainability plan for the actions outlined in this Framework to ensure that they do not stop at mere consultation;
- African Union (AU): AMCOW reported on the decision by the Heads of State of the African Union to declare 2026 as the Year of Water in Africa. This reinforces AMCOW's position on the implementation of the AU's Agenda 2063 adopted in 2013, and it is counting on all stakeholders in this consultation framework to support it in this regard.

- Move towards profound reforms in our States with increased budgets for the water sector and strengthened governance frameworks (as in Senegal with the Higher Water Council [CSE]).
- To this end, one proposal would be to have this CSE chaired by the presidents of our various member states, around whom all national structures working in the water sector would gravitate.
- Promote the establishment of a Water Development Fund in our member states, which will be financed by all water users (industrial companies, etc.) so that water finally finances water.
- In the context of the Outlook on the role of women within the CRCRE, two proposals/questions were addressed to the WRMC/ECOWAS:
 - How can this body contribute to strengthening women's involvement in the water sector and all its components (sustainable access, prevention of water-related disasters and conflicts, etc.)?
 - How can we ensure the involvement of women and young people as an integral part of the various decision-making processes (co-creation, consultation, etc.)?
- With regard to the functioning of the CRCRE: how do the colleges function internally before the sessions?

III.2. Session 2: ECOWAS and partner initiatives in the field of IWRM in West Africa

This session was facilitated by **Mr. Abdoukarim ASSAO**, Resource Officer at the Department of Environment and Water Resources (DERE) of the UEMOA Commission.

The following initiatives, either underway or in preparation, were presented:

- **ECOWAS Special Project** on Drinking Water Supply / CGRE/ECOWAS;
- Issues, challenges, place and role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the preservation of the FDH / **PRAI-FDH**;
- UN Water Conference 2026 / **Senegal**;
- West African Regional Water Forum (FREA) - **CGRE/ECOWAS**;
- Mobilizing and training West African youth on water issues through scientific innovation: Experience of the Stockholm Junior Water Prize / **NGO-FREEE**.

III.2.1. ECOWAS Special Project on Drinking Water Supply for Populations

The following comments/observations were made following this presentation:

- Ensure that a mechanism for financing and implementing infrastructure is adopted in line with the national WSS strategy at the country level;

- Draw on the experience of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) in the construction/management of drinking water infrastructure: *agreement on the transfer of infrastructure to beneficiaries with an emphasis on sustainability. Implementation was entrusted to executing agencies in the case of UEMOA;*
- Take into account aspects of groundwater pollution in the construction of infrastructure, particularly drilling: *the choice of locations should be made by countries that, in principle, are familiar with the realities of the identified locations;*
- Take into account the observations of the Focal Point of Nigeria, representing the Ministry in charge of Water Resources, regarding the sharing of information with the country's Ambassador to ECOWAS on the need for rapid implementation of this important project for the benefit of the population;
- Ensure that drilling is completed at the end of the dry season during low water periods for fundamentally favorable technical and hydrogeological reasons.

III.2.2. Issues, challenges, place and role of CSOs in the preservation of the Fouta Djallon Massif

The following comment was made following this presentation:

- Make a distinction between the different types of CSOs that are generally active in the basins, particularly in the Massif, namely the various groups of actors that comprise them, such as socio-professional actors, NGOs, youth organisations, women's organisations, etc.

III.2.3. Presentation of Pillar 4 “Regional integration” of the DREVE initiative

The following comments/observations were made following this presentation:

- How does the DREVE budget take into account the involvement of young people and women in the implementation of the project?
- Call for action to strengthen the capacity of young people to enable them to seize economic opportunities in the water sector (businesses, start-ups, innovation) in order to ensure the sustainability of the various initiatives related to integrated water resource management.

III.2.4. United Nations Water Conference 2026

- Youth advocacy for greater involvement in the various stages;
- Senegal would like to reassure all participants that everyone (States, local authorities, CSOs) will be involved in the implementation of the various stages of preparation/implementation of this important event, especially as the country holds the Presidency-in-Office of the AMCOW Secretariat.

III.2.4. Presentation of the West African Regional Water Forum (WARWF)

The comments received following this presentation include:

- Consider all aspects of the water nexus, including gender, environment and even transport/infrastructure: Water-Energy-Food-Environment-Gender-Transport (WEFEGI);
- Consider cooperation in its entirety (local, territorial, national, regional, and global cooperation);
- Emphasize water as a vector for peace!
- Share the FREAO Concept Note with resource persons to gather further fruitful contributions to avoid carbon copies and instead develop an initiative that is in harmony with our realities;
- Revise the wording of Priority Theme 3 of the FREAO Concept Note, taking into account the environment: Social Inclusion (gender, youth, CSOs, environment);
- Encourage this Forum to be a genuine framework for exchanges between all stakeholders, without distinction, in the search for truly sustainable solutions to the multiple challenges facing the region, in harmony with our realities;
- Proposal to include the Ecosystem dimension (integrating the environment, gender and youth) in this Nexus approach as follows: Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem (Environment, gender, youth, etc.);
- Adopt instead a comprehensive approach to inclusive governance (integrating other dimensions such as the environment, gender and youth, etc.).

III.2.5. Mobilizing and training West African youth on water issues through scientific innovation: the experience of the Stockholm Junior Water Prize (SJWP)

Comments received following this presentation included:

- In the short term, encourage the replication of such initiatives, which will be beneficial in our countries, and in the long term encourage the creation of a large-scale regional competition based on this model;
- Consider the possibility of creating a regional programme along these lines, supported by ECOWAS;
- Support the sharing of the experience of the NGO FREEE (national organiser in Benin) with other member states that may be interested;
- The African Water and Sanitation Association (AAEA) has announced the existence of a Strategic Council on Water and Sanitation within its organisation, made up of eight groups of specialists. To this end, it suggests considering the creation of a group of specialists on IWRM;

- The opportunity to find synergies to unite or set up a global platform for young people/specialists/professionals in water/sanitation/IWRM/agriculture, etc. at the level of organisations in the region, especially those that already exist and are doing wonderful things, such as the network of young water and sanitation professionals, the network of women water and sanitation professionals, the youth parliament, etc.;
- Within the framework of CMS5 Resolution 10 on the promotion of centres of excellence, support the development of a regional programme to promote such an initiative, drawing inspiration from the SJWP model.

III.2.6. Reminder of the rules for the election of the RCCWR President

This presentation served as a reminder of some of the rules governing the election of **the RCCWR President**. These rules are taken from the Statutes on the Functioning of the PFCM Organs adopted by Decision **A/DEC.4/01/06** of the **29th Session of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS**, held in Niamey in January 2006. The rules are as follows:

- 1. The RCCWR is headed by a President elected for a two-year term, renewable once;**
- 2. The Chair of the RCCWR may not be a member of the Technical Committee of Experts;**
This means, in particular, that representatives of States and TBOs are not eligible for the position of Chair of the RCCWR!
Only members of civil society organizations and local authorities are eligible for this position!
- 3. The text does not specifically address the procedures for electing the President of the RCCWR** as such; rather, it addresses the procedures for deliberation.
Article 10 of the RCCWR's internal regulations states: "The Sub-Regional Consultative Council shall take its decisions by consensus or, failing that, by a simple majority of the votes of the Members present or represented."
This means that consensus must be the rule, sought as far as possible, as is the case in all other PFCM bodies and, beyond that, in all ECOWAS bodies themselves.
Voting should only be resorted to in exceptional cases, when no consensus can be reached.
- 4. It is also understood that in all cases, all members present or represented shall approve or vote, if a vote is taken.**
- 5. It can be inferred from the above that a consensus candidate should be sought as far as possible from among the civil society representatives present here.**

6. It is recommended that these representatives consult with each other in order to present a consensus candidate who could be submitted for approval at the session for the election of the Chair of the RCCWR.
7. Female candidates are encouraged to apply;
8. If no consensus is reached, arrangements will be made for a secret ballot. All participants, including the representatives of States and TBOs, will vote.

Following the reminder of these rules, a few comments were made by participants, including the following:

- Give participants the opportunity to hear what the various candidates have to offer in terms of action plans for their two-year term;
- Provide the rules and expectations for this body;
- Share the texts governing the functioning of the Permanent Coordination and Monitoring Framework (PFCM) bodies for IWRM in West Africa;
- What are the expectations of the PFCM with regard to the President of the RCCWR?
- For the purposes of the election, provide an overview of the various members present from the different colleges that make up the RCCWR;
- Which team/office will work with the elected President? Possible answers: 'There is no office as such; it is the dynamism of the elected President that drives the office.' However, during the last CRCRE meetings, a request was made to revise the CRCRE's statutes and internal regulations (recommendation 2);
- To this end, consider taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the study on the institutional reform of the WRMC/ECOWAS planned in the WRMC's PTBA for this year.

III.3. Session 3: Election of a new RCCWR President

This session was facilitated by **Mr. Frédéric DABIRE**, Head of the Regional Water Management Support Program (PRA/ME) of CILSS

In accordance with **Article 31, paragraph 2, of the PFCM Statutes, a new RCCWR President was elected.**

Dr. Boluwaji ONABOLU, President of FEMinWASH/Nigeria, from civil society, was elected President by acclamation of the RCCWR for a two-year term.

Following her election by acclamation, the President-elect's remarks focused, among other things, on thanking the members for their trust. She also stated that this election is a collective responsibility and that she is counting on everyone's involvement to support her in this exciting new role.

Mr. Frédéric DABIRE, on behalf of all participants, congratulated **Dr. Boluwaji ONABOLU** on her election and assured her of everyone's support in carrying out her mission.

III.4. Session 4: Promoting greater involvement of civil society organizations in the regional IWRM process in West Africa

Facilitated by **Mr. Armand HOUANYE**, **Executive Secretary of the Global Water Partnership - West Africa (GWP-WA)**, this session took place in a roundtable format. The panelists included **Dr. Boluwaji ONABOLU** (President-elect of the RCCWR), **Nouradine Zakarie TOURE** (President of the CRBUN), **Herbert BANGURA** (MRU Youth Platform), **Réné BAYILI** (Consortium of Young Parliamentarians of West Africa's Transboundary Basins), **Armel MEWOUTH** (PTF/IUCN/PACO).

In turn, the various panelists shared information about their activities, the challenges they face, and possible courses of action to improve the involvement of civil society organizations in the regional IWRM process in West Africa and beyond in the implementation of water sector development policies and programs in the region.

The main challenges identified can be summarized as follows:

- The need for a change in mindset;
- Problems of access to financing for capacity building for young people in the sector;
- Difficulty in collaborating with states on strategic water sector issues: CSOs simply contribute;
- High level of needs without prioritization. It is essential to move towards prioritizing needs;
- At the level of farmers' organizations, it should be noted that leaders of these organizations are poorly equipped to effectively explain the various developments in the water sector;
- Promote the sustainability of youth actions in the sector by providing support;
- Formal aspects of the framework for youth collaboration in initiatives.

The courses of action identified can be summarized as follows:

- Strengthen the legitimacy of the new RCCWR Bureau by building on the dynamism of the elected President;
- Youth involvement: Consider partnering with other CSOs to strengthen greater participation by all stakeholder groups in perfect synergy and avoid competition and fragmentation;
- Request from the IUCN, PTF representative: in general, at the basin level, move towards structuring all CSO stakeholder groups involved in the various basins in the region in order to avoid competition and rivalry, which lead to the dispersion of the meager financial resources available: Who are we ultimately working with?

- The issue of technical management capacities, including the management of the financial resources so badly needed by these stakeholder groups;
- Inclusion of the actions of these stakeholder groups in the sustainability plans of the structures responsible for managing these basins;
- With regard to NBA, this structuring problem does not arise because all the stakeholder groups involved in the basin are grouped together within a National Coordination body, for which the State provides a building and a technical assistant who manages all aspects of management, including financial management. Membership is structured and by application, which means that all platforms are represented (fishing, drinking water, agriculture/market gardening, etc.):
- Sharing of OMVS experience on CSO structuring: at its level, a Basin Committee brings together all CSO actors involved at the basin level to federate all actors. There is also an OMVS Forum to further involve actors at the basin level by providing them with support;
- Proposal to ECOWAS, with the RCCWR, to map all the actors operating in the region's various basins;
- Reiterate the proposal to the CGRE/ECOWAS to initiate a Regional Programme dedicated to the inclusion of civil society under its PTBA for greater effectiveness of action;
- Support efforts to promote the effective and high-quality participation of these different stakeholder groups at the regional level;
- Consider an action plan to strengthen the capacities of stakeholder groups.

At the end of the session, the Director of the CGRE thanked the panelists for their contributions and reiterated the importance that ECOWAS attaches to the participation of civil society organizations in the regional IWRM process. He also invited the representatives of the States and the TOBs to work towards the same goal at their level.

IV. Miscellaneous

The PED announced the upcoming organisation of a **Conference on Afro-Centred Hydro-Diplomacy**. The conference will be held between the University of Dakar (UCAD), the University of Geneva, and the Universities of Montreuil and Brussels. It will take place in September 2025, with the exact date to be announced at a later date. The overall objective of this conference is to share experiences in conflict prevention/management.

To this end, the PED urges English-speaking states to come forward and share their proposals for experiences they would like to share at this conference.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 1ST EXTRA SESSION OF THE RCCWR

1. Recommendation No. 1 on the regular holding of RCCWR statutory meetings:

We call on ECOWAS to ensure that RCCWR meetings are held regularly.

2. Recommendation No. 2 on the revision of PFCM texts

We recommend that the statutes and internal rules and regulations governing the functioning of the PFCM bodies be revised, considering the concerns of all stakeholders in the PFCM bodies.

3. Recommendation No. 3 on greater involvement of civil society organizations in the regional IWRM process in West Africa

We call on ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, TBOs and member states to put in place a plan to strengthen the capacity of CSOs to ensure their greater involvement in the regional IWRM process in West Africa.

4. Recommendation No. 4 on the establishment of a regional organization of civil society organizations in West Africa's transboundary basins

We call on ECOWAS, in collaboration with UEMOA, CILSS and TBOs, to support the establishment of a regional organization of CSOs in West African transboundary basins.

5. Recommendation No. 5 on mobilizing and training West African youth on water issues through scientific innovation: Experience of the Stockholm Junior Water Prize (SJWP)

- Establish a scientific innovation competition for young people in West Africa, with a prize to be awarded;
- Set up initiatives to improve youth involvement and mobilization around IWRM issues.

6. Recommendation No. 6 on the involvement of CSOs in the implementation of the Water-Food-Energy Nexus Program

Call for sustained involvement of CSOs in the design and implementation of all programs related to the water-food-energy-environment-transport nexus

7. Recommendation No. 7 on the involvement of civil society organizations, including women's and youth organizations, in the implementation of the WERF

Call on ECOWAS to ensure the optimal involvement of CSOs in the implementation of the West African Regional Water Forum (WARWF).

8. Recommendation No. 8 on the participation of West African civil society organizations in activities related to the 2026 United Nations Water Conference

We call on ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, TBOs, and PTFs to support the participation of CSOs from the region in the 2026 UN Water Conference activities.

9. Recommendation No. 8 on capitalizing on economic governance instruments

We call on ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, TBOs and PTFs, in conjunction with Member States, to promote the establishment of a Regional Water Development Fund in our Member States, to be financed by all water users.

VI. CLOSING CEREMONY

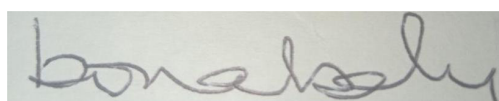
The closing ceremony was chaired by **Dr. Bakary FATY**, representing the Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation of Senegal (host country).

It featured two speeches:

The first speaker was the new **Chair of the RCCWR**, who expressed her sincere thanks to the members of the RCCWR for the trust placed in her and pledged to work tirelessly to ensure the efficient running of the RCCWR and enable it to play its full role in the implementation of the regional IWRM process in West Africa. She also thanked Senegal for its hospitality and the ECOWAS CGRE for its leadership in efficiently conducting the IWRM process in the region.

Finally, the closing speech was delivered by **Dr. Bakary FATY**, Representative of the Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation of Senegal, who also welcomed the smooth running of the workshop and the results achieved. On behalf of the Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation, he expressed his gratitude to the Commissioner for Infrastructure, Energy and Digitalization of the ECOWAS Commission for the confidence placed in Senegal to host the present PFCM bodies (TCE and RCCWR), before declaring the PFCM meetings in Dakar closed.

Done in Dakar on July 11, 2025



The Chair of the RCCWR

ANNEX**ANNEX 1: Agenda of the Session**

Schedule	Sessions/Activities	Facilitators
Day 1: Thursday, July 10, 2025		
8:00	Arrival and registration of participants	CGRE/ECOWAS
9:00	Opening ceremony: - Remarks by the National Focal Point for IWRM in Senegal - Address by the ECOWAS Commissioner for Infrastructure, Energy and Digitalization (or his representative) - Opening speech by the Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation of Senegal (or his representative)	Master of Ceremonies
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Coffee	
Session 1: Introductory Session		President of the TCE
10:00	Introduction of participants	Participants
10:15	Adoption of the agenda	Facilitator
10:30	Introductory note	CGRE/ECOWAS
11:00	Regional IWRM process in West Africa: main results, challenges, prospects and expectations	CGRE/ECOWAS
12:00	CGRE Work Program for 2025	CGRE/ECOWAS
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Lunch	
Session 2: ECOWAS and partner initiatives in the field of IWRM in West Africa		Director, DAREN/UEMOA
2:30	ECOWAS Special Project on Drinking Water Supply for Populations	CGRE/ECOWAS

3:00	Issues, challenges, place and role of CSOs in preserving the FDH	PRAI-FDH
3:30	Water-Food-Energy Nexus Program	AfDB
4:00 p.m.	UN Water Conference 2026	
4:30	West African Regional Water Forum (WARWF)	CGRE/CEDEAO
5:00 p.m.	Mobilizing and training West African youth on water issues through scientific innovation: the Stockholm Water Prize experience	NGO FREEE
5:30	Reminder of the rules for the election of the RCCWR President	CGRE/ECOWAS
6:00	End of the day	
Day 2: Friday, July 11, 2025		
9:00	Review of Day 1	
Session 3: Election of a new RCCWR President		PRAME/CILSS Coordinator
9:30	Election of a new RCCWR President	
10:30	Coffee	
Session 4: Promoting greater involvement of civil society organizations in the regional IWRM process in West Africa		Executive Secretary, GWP/WA
11:00	roundtable: “Involvement of civil society organizations in the regional IWRM process in West Africa: issues, challenges, and courses of action” (Chair: RCCWR, CRUBN, MRU Youth Platform, Consortium of Young Parliamentarians from Transboundary Basins in West Africa, Feminwash, Director of CGRE, UNICEF)	
1:00 p.m.	Lunch	
Session 5: Final Session		Director of CGRE
2:30	Review and adoption of the session report	
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	- Closing ceremony - Reading of the report of the 1st Extraordinary Session of the RCCWR - Remarks by the President of the RCCWR	

	▪ Closing speech by the Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation of Senegal (or his representative)
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ANNEX 2: List of participants